

COMMISSION ON STATE MANDATES

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July 21, 2006

Mr. David E. Scribner
Scribner Consulting Group, Inc.
3840 Rosin Court, Suite 190
Sacramento, CA 95834

And Affected Parties and State Agencies (See Enclosed Mailing List)

Re: **Proposed Parameters and Guidelines and Notice of Prehearing Conference**
Charter Schools III, 99-TC-14
Education Code Sections 41365, 47605, subdivisions (b), (c), (d), (j) and (l), 47604.3, 47607, subdivision (c), 47612.5, 47613 (former § 47613.7), and 47630-47664
Statutes 1996, Chapter 786; Statutes 1998, Chapters 34 and 673; Statutes 1999, Chapters 162, 736, and 78
California Department of Education Letter (May 22, 2000)
Western Placer Unified School District and Fenton Avenue Charter School, Claimants

Dear Mr. Scribner:

The Commission on State Mandates (Commission) received the claimants' proposed parameters and guidelines for the above-named program on July 7, 2006. Staff reviewed the proposal and deemed it to be complete, but not timely filed.

The Commission's letter dated May 30, 2006, notified the claimants that the proposed parameters and guidelines were due on June 25, 2006, which is 30 days after the Commission's adoption of the Statement of Decision. Government Code section 17557, subdivision (a), specifically states:

[The] successful test claimants shall submit proposed parameters and guidelines within 30 days of adoption of a statement of decision on a test claim. At the request of a successful test claimant, the commission may provide for one or more extensions of this 30-day period at any time prior to its adoption of the parameters and guidelines. If proposed parameters and guidelines are not submitted within the 30-day period and the commission has not granted an extension, then the commission shall notify the test claimant that the amount of reimbursement the test claimant is entitled to for the first 12 months of incurred costs will be reduced by 20 percent, unless the test claimant can demonstrate to the commission why an extension of the 30-day period is justified.

This letter serves as notification to the claimants and the State Controller's Office that the proposed parameters and guidelines were not timely filed, and therefore, the claimants' reimbursement claims for the first 12 months of incurred costs must be reduced by 20 percent.

Review and Comments. All state agencies and interested parties in receipt of this letter are invited to comment on the proposed parameters and guidelines. Recommendations and comments must be submitted to the Commission by **August 4, 2006**. The claimants and interested parties may file rebuttals with the Commission by **August 18, 2006**. The claimants, state agencies, and interested parties are required to submit an original and two (2) copies of written responses or rebuttals to the Commission and to simultaneously serve copies on the test claimants, state agencies, and interested parties on the mailing list.

Prehearing Conference. At your request, a prehearing conference to discuss consolidating these proposed parameters and guidelines with the existing *Charter Schools II* parameters and guidelines is scheduled for Wednesday, **September 27, 2006**, at 10:30 a.m. at the offices of the Commission on State Mandates, located at 980 Ninth Street, Suite 300 in Sacramento, California. A hearing on this matter will be set when the record closes.

Please contact Cathy Cruz Jefferson at (916) 323-8218 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

NANCY PATTON

Assistant Executive Director

Enc.: Claimants' Proposed Parameters and Guidelines

PROPOSED PARAMETERS AND GUIDELINES

Education Code Sections 41365, 47605, subdivisions (b),(c),(d), (j) and (l), 47604.3, 47607, subdivision (c), 47612.5, 47613 (former § 47613.7), and 47630-47664

Statutes 1996, Chapter 786, Statutes 1998, Chapter 34, Statutes 1998, Chapter 673, Statutes 1999, Chapter 162, Statutes 1999, Chapter 736, Statutes 1999, Chapter 78

California Department of Education Letter (May 22, 2000)

Charter Schools III (99-TC-14)

Western Placer Unified School District and Fenton Avenue Charter School, Claimants

I. SUMMARY OF MANDATE

On May 25, 2006, the Commission on State Mandates (Commission) adopted its Statement of Decision that the test claim statutes impose a reimbursable state-mandated program on school districts or county offices of education within the meaning of article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution and Government Code sections 17514 and 17556 for the following activities:

- **Findings on denial:** Upon denial of a charter petition, a school district makes written findings of fact to support one or more of the following findings: (1) the charter school presents an unsound educational program for pupils; (2) petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the educational program; (3) the petition does not include the required number of signatures; (4) the petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions, as specified in statute (§ 47605, subd. (b), amended by Stats. 1998, ch. 34)
- **Transfer funds in lieu of property taxes:** except for local educational agencies that charge fees under Education Code section 47613, subdivision (c), a school district or county office of education that sponsors a charter school and transfers funds in lieu of property taxes to the charter school (§ 47635, added by Stats. 1999, ch. 78).
- **Financial information:** for school districts or county offices of education that are chartering authorities, including the revenues and expenditures generated by the charter school in the in the school district's or county office of education's annual statement, in a CDE-specified format. This activity is only reimbursable from May 22, 2000 until June 30, 2001.

II. ELIGIBLE CLAIMANTS

Any school district that incurs increased costs as a result of this reimbursable state-mandates program is eligible to claim reimbursement of those costs.

III. PERIOD OF REIMBURSEMENT

Government Code section 17557, subdivision (e), as amended by Statutes 2004, chapter 890, states that a test claim shall be submitted on or before June 30 following a given fiscal year to establish eligibility for reimbursement for that fiscal year. The test claim was filed on June 29, 2000. Therefore, the costs associated with the approved reimbursable state-mandated activities are reimbursable beginning January 1, 1999.

Actual costs for one fiscal year shall be included in each claim. Estimated costs for the subsequent year may be included on the same claim, if applicable. Pursuant to Government Code section 17561, subdivision (d)(1)(A), all claims for reimbursement of initial year's costs shall be submitted to the Controller within 120 days of notification by the State Controller of the issuance date for the of claiming instructions.

If the total costs for a given year do not exceed \$1,000, no reimbursement shall be allowed, except as otherwise allowed by Government Code section 17564.

IV. REIMBURSABLE ACTIVITIES

To be eligible for mandated cost reimbursement for any fiscal year, only actual costs may be claimed. Actual costs are those costs actually incurred to implement the mandated activities. Actual costs must be traceable and supported by source documents that show the validity of such costs, when they were incurred, and their relationship to the reimbursable activities. A source document is a document created at or near the same time the actual cost was incurred for the event or activity in question. Source documents may include, but are not limited to, employee time records or time logs, sign-in sheets, invoices, and receipts.

Evidence corroborating the source documents may include, but is not limited to, worksheets, cost allocation reports (system generated), purchase orders, contracts, agendas, and declarations. Declarations must include a certification or declaration stating, "I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct," and must further comply with the requirements of Code of Civil Procedure section 2015.5. Evidence corroborating the source documents may include data relevant to the reimbursable activities otherwise in compliance with local, state, and federal government requirements. However, corroborating documents cannot be substituted for source documents.

The claimant is only allowed to claim and be reimbursed for increased costs for reimbursable activities identified below. Increased cost is limited to the cost of an activity that the claimant is required to incur as a result of the mandate.

For each eligible claimant, the following activities are reimbursable:

A. Reimbursement From May 22, 2000 – June 30, 2001

1. **Financial information:** for school districts or county offices of education that are chartering authorities, including the revenues and expenditures generated by the charter

school in the in the school district's or county office of education's annual statement, in a CDE-specified format.

B. Ongoing Activities

1. **Findings on denial:** Upon denial of a charter petition, a school district makes written findings of fact to support one or more of the following findings: (1) the charter school presents an unsound educational program for pupils; (2) petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the educational program; (3) the petition does not include the required number of signatures; (4) the petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions, as specified in statute.
2. **Transfer funds in lieu of property taxes:** except for local educational agencies that charge fees under Education Code section 47613, subdivision (c), a school district or county office of education that sponsors a charter school and transfers funds in lieu of property taxes to the charter school.

V. CLAIM PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

Each of the following cost elements must be identified for each reimbursable activity identified in Section IV, Reimbursable Activities, of this document. Each claimed reimbursable cost must be supported by source documentation as described in Section IV. Additionally, each reimbursement claim must be filed in a timely manner.

A. Direct Cost Reporting

Direct costs are those costs incurred specifically for the reimbursable activities. The following direct costs are eligible for reimbursement.

1. Salaries and Benefits

Report each employee implementing the reimbursable activities by name, job classification, and productive hourly rate (total wages and related benefits divided by productive hours). Describe the specific reimbursable activities performed and the hours devoted to each reimbursable activity performed.

2. Materials and Supplies

Report the cost of materials and supplies that have been consumed or expended for the purpose of the reimbursable activities. Purchases shall be claimed at the actual price after deducting discounts, rebates, and allowances received by the claimant. Supplies that are withdrawn from inventory shall be charged on an appropriate and recognized method of costing, consistently applied.

3. Contracted Services

Report the name of the contractor and services performed to implement the reimbursable activities. If the contractor bills for time and materials, report the number of hours spent on the activities and all costs charged. If the contract is a fixed price, report the services that were performed during the period covered by the reimbursement claim. If the

contract services are also used for purposes other than the reimbursable activities, only the pro-rata portion of the services used to implement the reimbursable activities can be claimed. Submit contract consultant and attorney invoices with the claim and a description of the contract scope of services.

4. Fixed Assets and Equipment

Report the purchase price paid for fixed assets and equipment (including computers) necessary to implement the reimbursable activities. The purchase price includes taxes, delivery costs, and installation costs. If the fixed asset or equipment is also used for purposes other than the reimbursable activities, only the pro-rata portion of the purchase price used to implement the reimbursable activities can be claimed.

5. Travel

Report the name of the employee traveling for the purpose of the reimbursable activities. Include the date of travel, destination point, the specific reimbursable activity requiring travel, and related travel expenses reimbursed to the employee in compliance with the rules of the local jurisdiction. Report employee travel time according to the rules of cost element A.1, Salaries and Benefits, for each applicable reimbursable activity.

6. Training

Report the cost of training an employee to perform the reimbursable activities, as specified in Section IV of this document. Report the name and job classification of each employee preparing for, attending, and/or conducting training necessary to implement the reimbursable activities. Provide the title, subject, and purpose (related to the mandate of the training session), dates attended, and location. If the training encompasses subjects broader than the reimbursable activities, only the pro-rata portion can be claimed. Report employee training time for each applicable reimbursable activity according to the rules of cost element A.1, Salaries and Benefits, and A.2, Materials and Supplies. Report the cost of consultants who conduct the training according to the rules of cost element A.3, Contracted Services.

B. Indirect Cost Rates

Indirect costs are costs that have been incurred for common or joint purposes. These costs benefit more than one cost objective and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. After direct costs have been determined and assigned to other activities, as appropriate, indirect costs are those remaining to be allocated to benefited cost objectives. A cost may not be allocated as an indirect cost if any other cost incurred for the same purpose, in like circumstances, has been claimed as a direct cost.

Indirect costs include: (a) the indirect costs originating in each department or agency of the governmental unit carrying out state mandated programs, and (b) the costs of central governmental services distributed through the central service cost allocation plan and not otherwise treated as direct costs.

VI. RECORD RETENTION

Pursuant to Government Code section 17558.5, subdivision (a), a reimbursement claim for actual costs filed by a local agency or school district pursuant to this chapter is subject to the initiation of an audit by the Controller no later than three years after the date that the actual reimbursement claim is filed or last amended, whichever is later.

However, if no funds are appropriated or no payment is made to a claimant for the program for the fiscal year for which the claim is filed, the time for the Controller to initiate an audit shall commence to run from the date of initial payment of the claim. In any case, an audit shall be completed not later than two years after the date that the audit is commenced. All documents used to support the reimbursable activities, as described in Section IV, must be retained during the period subject to audit. If an audit has been initiated by the Controller during the period subject to audit, the retention period is extended until the ultimate resolution of any audit findings.

VII. OFFSETTING SAVINGS AND REIMBURSEMENTS

Any offsetting savings the claimant experiences in the same program as a result of the same statutes or executive orders found to contain the mandate shall be deducted from the costs claimed. In addition, reimbursement for this mandate from any source, including but not limited to, services fees collected, federal funds, and other state funds, shall be identified and deducted from this claim.

VIII. STATE CONTROLLER'S CLAIMING INSTRUCTIONS

Pursuant to Government Code section 17558, subdivision (b), the Controller shall issue claiming instructions for each mandate that requires state reimbursement not later than 60 days after receiving the adopted parameters and guidelines from the Commission, to assist local agencies and school districts in claiming costs to be reimbursed. The claiming instructions shall be derived from the test claim decision and the parameters and guidelines adopted by the Commission.

Pursuant to Government Code section 17561, subdivision (d)(1), issuance of the claiming instructions shall constitute a notice of the right of the local agencies and school districts to file reimbursement claims, based upon parameters and guidelines adopted by the Commission.

IX. REMEDIES BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Upon request of a local agency or school district, the Commission shall review the claiming instructions issued by the State Controller or any other authorized state agency for reimbursement of mandated costs pursuant to Government Code section 17571. If the Commission determines that the claiming instructions do not conform to the parameters and guidelines, the Commission shall direct the Controller to modify the claiming instructions and the Controller shall modify the claiming instructions to conform to the parameters and guidelines as directed by the Commission.

In addition, requests may be made to amend parameters and guidelines pursuant to Government Code section 17557, subdivision (d), and California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1183.2.

X. LEGAL AND FACTUAL BASIS FOR THE PARAMETERS AND GUIDELINES

The Statement of Decision is legally binding on all parties and provides the legal and factual basis for the parameters and guidelines. The support for the legal and factual findings is found in the administrative record for the test claim. The administrative record, including the Statement of Decision, is on file with the Commission.